

IN THE DRAWINGS:

Attached is a Submission of Replacement Drawing Sheets including a change to Fig. 10. These Replacement Drawing Sheets, which include all of Figs. 1-10 in this application, replace the previously-filed drawing sheets. In these Replacement Drawing Sheets, Fig. 10 has been amended to replace the term "EXTRACRT" with --EXTRACT-- in step S5.

REMARKS

Summary of the Office Action

The drawings stand objected to because Fig. 10 allegedly has a typographical error.

Claims 1 and 7 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph, as allegedly failing to comply with the written description requirement.

Claims 1, 7 and 22 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as allegedly being indefinite.

Claims 1, 5-7, 11-13, 16 and 17 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kondo et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,618,396) (hereinafter "Kondo") in view of Kobayashi et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,144,411) (hereinafter "Kobayashi") in further view of Sato et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,802,017) (hereinafter "Sato").

Claims 3, 9 and 14, while objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, would be allowable if rewritten in independent form.

Summary of the Response to the Office Action

Independent claims 1, 7 and 13 have been amended to include the features of dependent claims 3, 9 and 14, respectively, in light of the Office Action's indication of allowable subject matter in those dependent claims. Accordingly, claims 3, 9 and 14 have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer. Independent claim 22 has been amended to recite similar features as the allowable features of dependent claims 3, 9 and 14. Claims 1, 7, 13 and 22 have been amended to differently describe embodiments of the disclosure of the instant application's specification

and/or to improve the form of the claims. Accordingly, claims 1, 4-7, 10-13 and 15-26 remain pending for consideration. A Submission of Replacement Drawing Sheets is attached hereto.

Objection to Drawings

The drawings stand objected to because Fig. 10 allegedly has a typographical error. Attached is a Submission of Replacement Drawing Sheets including a change to Fig. 10. These Replacement Drawing Sheets, which include all of Figs. 1-10 in this application, replace the previously-filed drawing sheets. In these Replacement Drawing Sheets, Fig. 10 has been amended to replace the term "EXTRACRT" with --EXTRACT-- in step S5 in order to address this apparent typographical issue in the drawing. Accordingly, withdrawal of the objection to the drawings is respectfully requested.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 112, first and second paragraphs

Claims 1 and 7 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph, as allegedly failing to comply with the written description requirement. Claims 1, 7 and 22 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as allegedly being indefinite. Applicants have amended claims 1, 7 and 22 in accordance with the Examiner's comments regarding these rejections. Applicants respectfully submit that claims 1, 7 and 22, as amended, fully comply with the requirements of 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 112, first and second paragraphs be withdrawn.

Rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

Claims 1, 5-7, 11-13, 16 and 17 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kondo in view of Kobayashi in further view of Sato.

Independent claims 1, 7 and 13 have been amended to include the features of dependent claims 3, 9 and 14, respectively, in light of the Office Action's indication of allowable subject matter in those dependent claims. Accordingly, these newly-amended independent claims are deemed to now be in prima-facie condition for allowance. Accordingly, claims 3, 9 and 14 have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer. While the Office Action is not clear as to whether or not independent claim 22 is currently rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a), independent claim 22 has also been amended to recite similar features as the allowable features of dependent claims 3, 9 and 14. Claims 1, 7, 13 and 22 have been amended to differently describe embodiments of the disclosure of the instant application's specification and/or to improve the form of the claims.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that each of independent claims 1, 7, 13 and 22 of the instant application is now in condition for allowance. In addition, the remaining dependent claims are in condition for allowance at least because of their dependence on newly-amended independent claim 1, 7, 13 or 22.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, Applicants submit that the pending claims currently under consideration are in condition for allowance, and respectfully request reconsideration and timely allowance of these claims. Should the Examiner feel that there are any issues outstanding after

consideration of this response, the Examiner is invited to contact Applicants' undersigned representative to expedite prosecution. A favorable action is awaited.


EXCEPT for issue fees payable under 37 C.F.R. § 1.18, the Commissioner is hereby authorized by this paper to charge any additional fees during the entire pendency of this application including fees due under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16 and 1.17 which may be required, including any required extension of time fees, or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 50-0573. This paragraph is intended to be a **CONSTRUCTIVE PETITION FOR EXTENSION OF TIME** in accordance with 37 C.F.R. § 1.136(a)(3).

Respectfully submitted,

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Dated: September 1, 2006

By:


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